

**. . . to insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence . . .**

**U.S. Army War College  
11th Annual Strategy Conference**

**Compiled by  
Dr. Max G. Manwaring**

On April 11-13, 2000, the U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute sponsored a major conference that examined what the Department of Defense (DoD) must do to "insure domestic tranquility and provide for the common defense"--given the increasing threats to the U.S. homeland. The conference brought together over 200 U.S. and foreign academic, business, civilian, governmental, and military leaders. The discussions generated an exceptionally rich exchange of information and ideas concerning problems and solutions to U.S. homeland defense for now and into the next century. In general, the conference discussions revolved around four salient and interrelated issues: the historical context for dealing with threats to the American homeland; the complex threat situation; the evolving strategy and structure for homeland defense; and some critical considerations and recommendations. This brief summary highlights the issues and recurring the themes that ran though the conference. The outstanding work done by all who participated in the conference will be reflected in a comprehensive anthology of the most salient presentations, and will be published by the U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute later this year.

**The Historical Context for Dealing with Threats to the American Homeland.**

The Founding Fathers acknowledged that a viable government required a military establishment formidable enough to defend its citizens from outside threats, and any lawless elements that might develop in their midst. Nevertheless, they were extremely concerned about the possible abuse of power and the related threat to freedom represented by a standing army. As a result, the Founding Fathers relied heavily on the state militias, and tolerated a substantial standing military establishment only under the most extreme circumstances. Moreover, both the militias and the regular military forces of the United States were carefully circumscribed by the separation of powers and checks and balances enumerated in the United States Constitution.

At the same time, there was no constitutional requirement for the regular armed forces to provide support to civil authority. It is under the Common Law concept of "Necessity" that regular military support to civil authority has been allowed. In this context, military involvement in domestic affairs has been minimal, and the emphasis has been on the fact that the regular armed forces are always in support of another federal, state, or local authority. Thus, the American military establishment has been on a short tether, and generally mandated to look outward--not inward.

Conference participants argued that Americans want to feel safe, but tend to be mistrustful of domestic law and order enforced by the regular military establishment, and--like their forbearers--are inclined to view armed enforcers of federal authority as a serious threat to freedom and liberty. As a consequence, as America's leaders look for new and more effective ways to provide for the common defense and domestic well-being, conference participants agreed that it would be wise to reconfirm the country's long-established values.

## **The Complex Threat Situation.**

Over the years, U.S. national security has generally been viewed as protection from external attack, and thought of largely in terms of military defenses against military threats. But, given the threats inherent in the predominantly interdependent global security environment, that is clearly too narrow a conception. American security today involves much more than the domestic procurement and external application of military forces. It involves important nonmilitary elements, as well as domestic and civil dimensions.

First, in the chaos of the "new world disorder," the threat of devastating attacks on the United States, its interests, and its friends perpetrated by the former Soviet Union, China, or other contemporary nuclear powers retains a certain credibility. At the same time, the challenges for American security are expected to intensify with the growing sophistication of biological and chemical warfare. Third, these challenges to national security are further complicated by traditional and nontraditional asymmetric threats emanating from virtually a thousand different political actors with a cause--and the will. Finally, the United States, its citizens, and its interests are severely challenged by nonmilitary threats by another thousand actors with access--as only one example--to cyber space.

Evidence of these threats is clearly seen in the North Korean capability to launch nuclear missiles that can reach the U.S. mainland; the Japanese Aum Shinrikyo cult's willingness to poison the Tokyo subway system; the foreign and domestic terrorist bombings of the New York City World Trade Center, and the Oklahoma City Federal Building; some owners of international mobile capital willing to generate and exploit a financial crisis in Southeast Asia that inflicted socio-economic-political devastation that could not have been exceeded by a regional war; and the very real "hacker" capability to impair the security of an army or a nation electronically as effectively as a nuclear weapon.

The threat of any one or several political actors in the global community willing to use weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, and/or nonmilitary weapons for their own nefarious purposes is serious enough that it cannot be ignored. Moreover, the consequences--the aftermath--of contemporary warfare to the civil population and the national infrastructure are so serious that they must be addressed. In these terms, there is a clear requirement to prepare and plan more comprehensively for the civil-military implications of national defense. In the increasingly complex domestic security environment that was foreseen, conference participants agreed the military establishment cannot deal with the diverse threats alone. Traditional military defense is but one element of a broader national security structure. If the United States is to be successful in meeting the threats--and the possible devastating consequences--of contemporary conflict and homeland defense now and in the future, it would seem reasonable to expect that the entire federal and state governmental structure become more cooperatively engaged.

## **The Evolving Strategy and Structure for Homeland Defense.**

For a long time--probably since the War of 1812--the continental United States has been relatively immune from the bloody consequences and physical destruction of conflict. As a result, the concept of homeland defense has been generally absent from American thinking. Recently, however, the issue of conflict and possible catastrophic consequences for the United States and its population is emerging in opinion polls as an important public concern. The proliferation of information has provided the American public with several reasons for concern: (1) the vivid

experience of other members of the global community in bloody and horrible conflict; (2) the clear understanding that China, North Korea, and other nuclear powers are building intercontinental ballistic missiles that can reach the United States; (3) the perception of an enormous inventory of weapons of mass destruction (WMD)--nuclear, biological, and chemical--ready to be used against American targets; (4) the reality of nontraditional and asymmetric warfare; (5) the emergence of transnational and intranational nonstate actors not subject to deterrence through the classical military instruments of power; and, finally, (6) the haunting realization that "it can happen here," exacerbated by visions of confused, piecemeal, and ad hoc federal, state, and local responses to recent man-made and natural disasters that have taken place in the United States.

Thus, the lack of an evident strategy and structure for homeland defense has been validated by a congressional initiative asking the DOD to develop recommendations for a national strategy and organization to deal more adequately with the problem. Proposed solutions to the homeland defense issue include a DOD mandate for closer and more active involvement of the National Guard and Reserve Components of the U.S. armed forces in the federal support to the homeland defense process--particularly in response to possible WMD catastrophes. Proposed solutions to the problems of strategy (i.e., ends, ways, and means) and organization (i.e., defining who is in charge and how the various elements are integrated) have run-up against several "fault lines." These obstacles are found between prevention and crisis management issues, and/or consequence management processes. Among others, fault lines include: (1) the lack of a commonly accepted definition of homeland defense; (2) the generally reactive approach to law enforcement and national security matters that does not allow much latitude for prevention or deterrence; (3) the lack of understanding concerning nontraditional and nonmilitary threats and how to deal with them; (4) crossing federal, state, and local jurisdictions; (5) interagency squabbling over appropriations, turf, and responsibilities at all levels of government; and, finally, (6) the American citizen's right to privacy.

Despite the confusion, conference participants agreed that the message from the American people is clear. The end of the Cold War did not signal the end of all global conflict--rather, the reverse is true. Moreover, if we want to preserve our domestic well-being and continue to benefit from it--we must take the necessary steps to defend it. Conference consensus was that the first step in an attempt to insure the domestic tranquility would be the development of a new paradigm of cooperation--that is, a historically viable and constitutionally supported unity of national effort. Thus, in the larger perspective, the exercise of military "command and control" must give way to unity of civil-military command, and--then--to unity of national effort. In these terms, within a federal system that includes separation of powers and checks and balances "to preserve the blessings of liberty," "command and control" must accommodate to "coordination and cooperation."

### **Some Critical Considerations and Recommendations.**

Probably sooner than later, it is likely that the homeland defense issue will emerge "surprisingly" in the national political arena. It is important that policymakers, decisionmakers, opinionmakers, and ordinary citizens are prepared to deal with this vital issue. In that connection, conference participants argued for three critical considerations.

First, the temptation should be resisted to give the U.S. armed forces a mandate to "lead in support," as a quick and easy solution to the complex homeland defense issue. Several good reasons were set forth to support that argument. Suffice it to say here that we live in an conflictive and multicultural country in which there is some erosion of moral legitimacy evident in the

Federal Government and its institutions. Thus, it is recommended that DOD do everything possible to vigilantly pursue a long-term strategy to perform its primary war-fighting mission right and well; and develop a better relationship with American society.

Second, rather than taking the easy way out of the problem, serious efforts should be made to develop a unified field theory for homeland defense that will provide policy and strategy guidance, and that will empower a new paradigm of federal, state, and local coordination and cooperation. Much like George Kennan did in developing the Cold War "containment" theory, it is recommended that follow-on Strategy Conference "workshops" be conducted that will be instrumental in framing the philosophical underpinnings of an organizing theory to assist in clarifying basic objectives, courses of action, and the primary means for accomplishing those purposes. This must include the organizational framework that can facilitate the holistic implementation of carefully planned, direct and indirect proactive and defensive political-diplomatic, socio-economic, psychological-moral, and military-police measures.

Third, within the parameters of a guiding theory for contemporary homeland defense, it is recommended that a new and broader deterrence concept be generated to supplement or replace the old and narrower nuclear deterrence paradigm. The first step in this process would be for Strategy Conference follow-on "workshops" to craft a carefully thought-out, holistic, long-term, and phased strategy that addresses the threats imposed by the diverse state, nonstate, and transnational actors active in the global and domestic security environments. Within the context of a field theory for homeland defense, the deterrence "Rule of Thumb" must move from U.S.-centric values, and determine precisely what a hostile leadership values most. The "deterrent" must then identify exactly how that cultural "thing"--whatever it is--can realistically be held at risk. Conversely, a new deterrence "Rule of Thumb" must also consider what a hostile leadership values most and--as opposed to the proverbial "stick"--identify precisely what "carrots" might also be offered as deterrents. The understanding of motives, culture, and the ability to communicate, thus, becomes crucial in a new civil-military deterrence equation.

## **Conclusions.**

Implementing the extraordinary challenges of reform and regeneration implied in this call for a major paradigm change will not be easy. It will, however, be far less demanding and costly in political, monetary, and military terms than continuing a short-term and generally military approach to contemporary homeland defense that is a long-term and inherently political-economic-informational-military problem.

These challenges and tasks are nothing radical. They are only basic security strategy and national asset management. By accepting these challenges, policymakers and opinionmakers can help fulfill the promise that the 11th Annual Strategy Conference and the proposed field theory for homeland defense offers.

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